

February 18, 2022 - 3:45 pm
Chief Bell Speaking Notes to Media

Thank you.

Bonjour à tous.

We are here to provide you with an update on our operations to end these unlawful protests that have done so much damage to our community and harmed our residents.

The operational plan is moving ahead as we expected and the contingencies we have put in place are effectively dealing with the threats we are seeing on the ground.

I thank Ottawa residents for their patience and support as they watch this operation unfold.

I also thank all of the planners, officers and emergency personnel, many of whom have come from across the country, to assist us.

I am proud to work with them all. Their assistance and is vital to this operation

We are in control of the situation on the ground and continue to push forward to clear our streets.

This methodical and well-resourced plan will take time and we are here to see it through to a safe end.

Last night, we began taking additional actions towards implementing our operation.

We moved officers and equipment into key positions throughout the city and took up 100 checkpoints around the downtown core.

We began making arrests of key individuals who were responsible for organizing these unlawful activities.

This morning, Public Order Units and a significant number of officers were deployed to support our operations.

We first focused on the Nicholas St. area where unlawful protesters were gathered with trucks.

Even this morning, all unlawful protestors were given many opportunities to leave.

Officers then turned to the intersection of Rideau and Sussex making more arrests and clearing that location.

As of 3 p.m. we have arrested 70 people. They have been charged with multiple offences including mischief.

Work is underway by the City of Ottawa to remediate and clean up the area we have gained back today.

We also saw that children were present in the area. We had prepared for this and had plans to ensure children were unharmed.

Before I take a few questions I want to acknowledge that these are not the images Ottawa residents want to see.

Ottawa is a welcoming and diverse city. It's a city we are all proud of.

We regularly host lawful and peaceful protests.

This is Family Day Weekend and usually the downtown would be filled with people enjoying the city, our Market area and the canal.

We are focused on returning our city to the place that we all know and love.

We will run this operation 24 hours a day until the residents and community have their entire city back.

I am available to take questions.